

JULY 1987

The

# ACE

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## PUB SPOT!

Hi folks, a little late again. Nobody to blame this time, but me. Hope the new look is worth a little delay. Low pirate activity and scarce loggings continue, but keep your fingers crossed. We'll be back on schedule next month, so stay with us. Many thanks to Jim Garrison and Lawrence Soley for providing us with interesting reading recently. Our issues would have been awfully slim without their great articles. Lets here from more of you in the future.



# LOGGINGS

*Contributions to the loggings column are gratefully accepted by the deadline of the 15th of each month. Loggings are preferred on logging forms which are available for a SASE. Contributions should be sent to: P.O.B. 2571, Shawnee Mission, KS. 66201. Contributions can also be left on the ACE TBBS at (913) 677-1288. Your editor: Kirk Baxter.*

## NORTH AMERICA - SHORT WAVE

**Voice of Tomorrow: 7409.7, 6/7, 0012-0059, SIO=322.** Monologue on J. E. B. Stuart's civil war exploits and virulent anti-Semitism mixes in with talk of poet Ezra Pound. Gave usual address of P. O. Box 20039, Ferndale, MI 48220. Xmsn interfered with MARS and/or military xmsn on 7410 kHz. Best reception was LSB. Severe fading from 0054 onward and lost around 0059. (RICHOLSON,VA)

**7410, 6/7, \*0000-0105\*, SIO=434.** Same tired white supremacist drivel (speaker sounded bored with it, too!) Symphony mx by Prussian composers, also "Conquistador" by Procol Harem. Gave Ferndale addr w/ Baltimore xmtr site. Freqs of 15040, 7410, 6240 and 1615 kHz. Excellent signal quality and strength. (SMITH,NY)

**6239.9, 6/7, 0113-0153\*, SIO=141-242.** Slight QSB, QRN & QRM. Moderate RTTY QRM at 0141. 0113-0116 had IS of drums and wolf cry. The show opened with "Welcome to the Voice of Tomorrow," followed by orchestral mx with choir. The majority of the show was a conversation between two men discussing various topics. Very little of this talk was audible. The pgm ended with the song "Tomorrow Belongs to Me," and a short IS. Did not hear mailing addr. Stated frequencies were 1616, 6240 & 7410. (SUESS,WI)

**7410, 6/7, 0040-0105, SIO=544.** The station was deep into a speech about the late American poet Ezra Pound. The speech described Pound's self imposed exile from the US, and his opposition to the US's role in WWII. After the speech, there was applause, so this was obviously a recording. Program ended with a wolf call, and an exhortation for White People to rise up and defend their doomed race.

**WKUE: 7414, 6/6, 2338-0012\*, SIO=343.** Top 40 show with "speedmouth" Laughing Bill. Mx from Steve Winwood, Rod Stewart, Three Dog Night, etc. Likeable warp-speed patter from Bill using quick "hig and run" DJ voice overs bridging songs. Used theme drops but no canned IDs. Says Bill: "This is Laughing Bill, WKUE. We're someplace on the radio dial. We don't know where we're gonna be, 'cause we're playing a tape - HA." Reception steadily improved through the xmsn until VOT signed on 7410 at 0000. (SMITH,NY)

**7415, 6/6, with fair signals and ute QRM.** Rod Stewart vocal among other rock selections. (MARTIN, VIA ACE BBS)

**UNID: 7410, 6/6, 0155-0201\*, SIO=122.** Hrd 2 female vocal folk songs, music ended. Carrier still on, an SSB xmsn commenced on 7408 for abt 1 minute, ended, then piano mx started playing on 7410. Xmsn cut off in mid-song, no ID, no nuttin'. (SMITH,NY)

**UNID: 7424, 5/9, 0459-0530\*, SIO=322.** Played songs including mx by Elton John. Sounded like they IDed with KLMN. They seemed to be using a VOX, as the transmitter would go on and off with speaking. (SMOLINSKI, VIA ACE BBS)

## ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD

*The following Europirates were logged by David Marwick in England on May 31, 1987. This will give you an idea of a day's pirate activity in England.*

**6200, Radio Valerie, SIO=212, Irish Station.** Said would QSO. 6220, Rainbow Radio Germany, EE/GG, SIO=333. 0900 Start. 6240, Radio Rainbow (Irish) 1100 Free Radio show. Problems with their xmtr. 1521 w/ 1000 watts and 98.1 FM Stereo. SIO=333. 6267 Radio Orion, SIO=322. Rock mx format and anncd the "Big O Sound". Asked for comments on programming. 6275 Radio Waves Int'l French station with brdct in FF/EE SIO=222. Ancd 6235. 6280 4FWS. Heard at 1030. IDed DJ "John England", SIO=222. Free radio news. 6285 Radio Apollo Int'l. SIO=233. 0923 IDed by YL and anncd their next brdct. Mail box show. 6300 Spectrum Leisure Comm. 0959, Rock and comedy format SIO=323. Ad for brdct equipment 6315 Southwest Radio (Dutch) 1045, SIO=212. 6850 Falcon Radio SIO=222 Heavy metal mx. 7360 Radio 101 (German) Rock mx EE/GG SIO=222. ID at 0920.

That concludes another month's worth of loggings, still on the sparse side. I hope that everyone traveling to the ANARC convention will stop by the ACE booth and say hello to George Zeller and Andrew O'brien and others that may be there. I will not be able to attend this year's convention since our second child should be arriving about that time, but I'll be eager to hear the details of the meeting. Please send in loggings from any activity this 4th of July weekend, so we can have a good turn-out for next month's column. The Fourth has always been a fairly active pirate period, but with the current poor conditions, it will remain to be seen how things fair this year.

## WHERE ARE WE???

Once again, let me clarify the address for ACE functions. If you are having problems with your subscription, lost issues, or are sending articles for reprinting in the ACE, please use our Baton Rouge address. Loggings for DiaLogs, and club news should be send to the Shawnee Mission address. Loggings for the Spy Center column should be send directly to Lani at the Sioux City address. This will help everyone receive their proper material quickly.



# Welcome to Spy Centre!

## 0000-0259

(absolutamente nada!)

## 0300-0359

4026 SS:,09,4,LP

## 0400-0459

3225 CZ:,30,A17f,My2sa,5-4,DM  
3258 GS:,36,A17f,4,DM  
4030 CZ5:,31,A17f,My2sa,4-5,DM

## 0500-0559

3090 SS:,11,A16th,1,DM  
3225 CZ5:,10,A16th,5,DM  
4545u GS:,12,A16th,4,DM

## 0600-0659

2707 GS:,08,A18sa,4,DM  
2709u GS:,33,A26su,3,PN,DM  
3225 CZ5,09,A18sa,3,DM  
3258 GS:,35,A26su,3,DM  
4030 CZ5:,36,A26su,4,DM  
4595 GS:,34,A26su,4,DM  
5015 GS:,09,A18sa,4,DM  
5017u GS:,37,A26su,4,DM  
7405u GS:,38,A26su,3,DM

## 0700-0759

4555 B?::00,A4sa,26su,3,5084,DM  
[555 555 555 000]  
5015 GS:,10,A10sa,4,DM  
5084 B?::02,A26su,4,4555,DM  
5410 GS:,05,A26su,3,DM  
6235 GS:,17,My25m,3,DM  
6453 GS:,03,A4sa,26su,My25m,4-3,DM

## 0800-0859

(nada)

## 0900-0959

6350 GS:,50,A12su,4,odd call, song  
title, "Teach Me to Dance", DM  
6453 GS:,07,My31su,3,DM  
7375 GS:,06,My31su,4,DM  
7410 GS:,05,My31su,4,DM

## 1000-1059

5820 GS:,01,A5,My31su,4-3,DM  
7405 GS:,40,A12su,4,DM  
9457 GS:,02,A5,My31su,5-4,Mx box,DM

## 1100-1159

5820 GS:,06,A18sa,4,DM

## 1200-1259

2707 GS:,10,A21tu,2,DM

5015 GS:,11,A21tu,4,DM  
6853 GS:,12,A21tu,3,DM  
7405 GS:,13,A21tu,4,DM  
8065u GS:,00,A21tu,My31su,3-4,DM

## 1300-1559

(otra vez, nada)

## 1600-1659

3370 GS:,00,My10su,3,DM  
4010 GS:,01,My10su,3,DM  
4030 CZ5:,02,My10su,3,DM  
9055 GS:,07,My10su,3,DM

## 1700-1759

3258 GS:,40,My29f,2,DM  
4012u GS:,41,My29f,3,DM  
4545u GS:,42,My29f,3,DM

## 1800-1859

3225 CZ5:,47,A20m,4,DM  
3372u GS:,46,A20,My25m,4,DM  
4012u GS:,47,A20,My25m,4,DM  
4030 CZ5:,48,A20,My25m,4,DM  
4595 GS:,49,My25m,4,DM  
6855u GS:,50,My25m,3,DM

## 1900-1959

3217 GS:,01,A11sa,4,DM  
3258 GS:,02,A11sa,4,DM  
3372u GS:,03,A11sa,3,DM  
[USB on hr.? DM]  
3385 GS:,04,A11sa,4,DM  
3820 GS:,05,A11sa,5,DM  
4010 GS:,06,A11sa,4,DM  
4030 CZ5:,05,A20m,4,DM  
4545u GS:,07,A11sa,4,DM  
4595 GS:,08,A11sa,4,DM  
4990 GS:,07,A20m,4,DM  
5015 GS:,09,A11sa,4,DM  
5184 GS:,11,A11sa,5,DM  
5284 GS:,08,A20m,4,DM  
5693 GS:,13,A11sa,5,DM  
6410 GS:,09,A20m,4,DM  
6507 GS:,14,A11sa,3,DM  
6785 ES:,15,A11sa,4,DM  
6825 ??:10,A20m,4, mad violin, DM  
6868 GS:,11,A20m,4,DM  
7740 ES:,16,A11sa,4,DM

## 2000-2059

3217 GS:,00,A6m,My3su,5,DM  
3225 CZ5:,00,A6m,My3su,4,DM  
3232 GS:,10,A16th,4,DM  
3258 GS:,00,A6m,My6w,5-4,DM  
3370 GS:,07,My3su,4,DM  
3372u GS:,50,My27w,3,DM

3820 GS:,02,A6m,My3w,5,DM  
4010 GS:,03,A6m,My3su,4,DM  
4012u GS:,49,My27w,4,DM  
4022 GS:,11,A16th,4,DM  
4030 CZ5:,04,A6m,5,DM  
4110 B?::19,My6w,4, "708"rp'd,DM  
4270 ES:,02,My6w,4,DM  
4435 Bx:,48,My27w,4, //5445,om,  
"602 999[x3]"rp'd,DM

4545 GS:,03,My6w,4,ZO call,DM  
4545u GS:,12,A16th,4,DM  
4740 B?::05,M6w,4,DM  
"999[3x] 000"

4990 GS:,06,A6m,4, //5440,DM  
5015 GS:,07,A6m,5,DM  
5184 GS:,10,My3su,4,DM  
5184u GS:,09,A6m,4,DM  
5284 GS:,51,My27w,4,DM  
5410 GS:,20,A25sa,My6w,5,chimes,DM  
5414 ES:,12,A16th,My3su,4,DM  
5440 GS:,10,A6m,4, //4990,DM  
5445 B?::45,My27w,4, //4435,om,DM  
5500 ES:,11,A6m,5,odd w/"fiver,  
niner",DM

5500 ??:31,A25sa,4,bugle call,  
//6675,DM

5733 GS:,03,My6w,4,DM  
5770 GS:,13,My3su,4,DM  
5890 ??:08,My6w,3, mad violin,  
//6825,DM

6507 GS:,11,My6w,3,DM  
6675 ??:32,A25sa,4,bugle call  
//5500,DM

6780 B?::10,M6w,3, "106"rp'd,DM  
6785 B?::12,A6m,4,same,DM  
6825 ??:09,My6w,4, mad violin,  
//5890,DM

6875 ES:,14,A16th,3,DM  
6920 GS:,33,A25sa,4,DM  
7588 ES:,15,My3su,4,DM  
7740 ES:,34,A25sa,4,DM  
8120 GS:,12,My6w,4,DM  
8312 GS:,14,A6m,3,DM  
9435 ES:,38,A25sa,3,DM  
9845 ES:,28,My6w,4,DM

## 2100-2159

3225 CZ5:,00,A25sa:,31,My1f,5-4,DM  
3258 GS:,01,A24sa:,32,My1f,3-4,DM  
3264u GS:,02,A25sa,3,PL call,DM  
3370 GS:,02,A25sa,3,DM  
3372u GS:,33,My1f,4,DM  
3820 GS:,03,A25sa:,34,My1f,4-5,DM  
4010 GS:,06,My7th,4,DM  
4030 CZ5:,04,A25sa:,36,My1f,5-4,DM  
4050 GS:,05,A25sa,4,DM  
4160 B?::07,My7th,4,DM  
4280 GS:,20,A25sa,4,DM  
4395 GS:,08,My7th,5,DM  
4545u GS:,06,A25sa,My7th,4,DM

4595u GS:,07,A25sa,My7th,4,DM  
4790 GS:,07,A25sa,4,DM  
5284 GS:,37,My1f,4,DM  
5298 GS:,14,A25sa,5,DM  
5315 GS:,11,My7th,4,DM  
5330 ES:,09,A25sa,3,DM  
6366 GS:,16,My7th,5,DM  
6373 GS:,11,A25sa,4,DM  
6506 ES:,10,A25sa,3,DM  
6825 ??:12,My7th,3, mad violin,DM  
7640 GS:,12,A25sa,3,DM  
7663 GS:,05,My27w,3,DM  
7740 ES:,06,A25sa,My27w,3-4,DM  
8070 RS:,39,My1f,4,DM  
9130 R?::20,My7th,4, just #s,om,DM  
11532 SS:,13,A25sa,2,DM

## 2200-2259

3150 PS:,33,A11sa,4,DM  
3225 CZ5:,34,A11sa,5,DM  
3232 GS:,35,A11sa,5,DM  
3264u GS:,36,A11sa,4,DM  
3372u GS:,37,A11sa,4,DM  
3820 GS:,38,A11sa,5,DM  
4012u GS:,39,A11sa,4,DM  
4455 GS:,40,A11sa,4,DM

## 2300-2359

(no hay mas)

Logs brought to you by:  
DM--David Markwick,E.Sussex,UK  
LP--Lani Pettit, ye ed. [one log!]

Thanx again, David! How about some of you old faithfuls logging a few? I will try to do better, too.

\*\*\*Do you think "glasnost" will bring us some long-awaited veries from USSR on the RS's, CZ5's, B5's hrd in Europe? Nah! No such luck!

\*\*\*Ye spy ed. heard her first E-skip on FM the other day! It could make an FM DXer out of me, it was so exciting! Would you believe Mexico on 91.7 at about 555 SIO!!! It was unreal! Will have my tape at ANARC.

\*\*\*Next column will be part 3 of the article on Station Charlie. So you have until Aug. 15 to get in your logs for the Sept. issue.

\*\*\*73s, Lani



\*\*\*\*\*  
 \* RADIO "PIRATES": \*  
 \* A BAD NAME FOR A \*  
 \* MISUNDERSTOOD BREED? \*  
 \* by \*  
 \* Jim Garrity \*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

We as regular readers of the A\*C\*F use the term "Pirate Radio" rather regularly and matter-of-factly, since as members of the Club we know that this has been the one Publication that has consistently been in the forefront of the reporting and chronicling of the activities of so-called "Pirate Stations". I would like, however, to suggest that maybe we are throwing the term "pirate" around rather loosely, and that perhaps in doing so, we are giving some interested but uninformed "outsiders" to our hobby of listening to these stations an unduly harsh and negative idea as to just what it is about these stations that makes us enjoy hunting out their elusive signals throughout the radio spectrum "From D.C. to Daylight".

First of all, let me state that I am NOT just making a semantic argument as to the use of the names by which we describe these Stations or their broadcasts. Instead, I will try to use this space in the Newsletter to make a real differentiation between what might truly be called "Pirate" operations, and what might better be described as "Free Radio" or "Unauthorized Broadcasting".

The word "pirate", while having some romantic and swashbuckling connotations, really is not a very flattering term to use to describe any activity. We should recall that the original "Pirates" of the seas were murdering, thieving marauders that plundered any ship on the high seas that they felt had valuable cargo, and couldn't outfight or outsail them. Once a Ship was taken, there were certainly "victims" of the pirates. In more modern times, the term "pirate" has been used to describe hijackings, (there are International Laws pertaining to Air Piracy-also called "skyjacking"), or other assorted theft-connected crimes. In the field of electronics, "pirate" cable T.V. boxes, satellite descrambling boxes, HDS downconverters, and VCR movie copies are all too abundant, and whether or not you agree that these devices or practices should be illegal, (I have some doubts of my own on some of these) there is no argument that the Courts agree that the use of all of the above constitutes Theft of Services, which is a violation of the Law, and definitely not a "victimless crime". By now, anyone that is still reading this is undoubtedly saying "This guy is talking out of his posterior!! (For lack of a better word) "Who cares about his moralizing, anyway, and how in hell does this relate to pirate radio??" Well, bear with me, I'm getting there.

In the field of Broadcasting, there have only been several acts of true "radio piracy", in my opinion. I refer to articles in several A\*C\*F back-issues. (August, '86, page 15-The Infamous Captain Midnight affair---- November, '86, page 12-Iranian Pirate T.V. transmission---- same issue, page 20-Chicago prankster "takes over" two local Radio Stations---- February '87, page 4-"The Day They Hijacked Radio One") All of these incidents have a common theme: The Captain Midnight incident involved a person at a satellite Uplink station deliberately and knowingly jamming his own signal into the satellite's transponder, thereby obliterating the H.B.O. Movie for a time. In the Chicago and Radio One incidents, the "pirate" effectively "captured" the Broadcaster's Studio-To-Transmitter microwave links, thereby inserting thier own programming into the station's transmitters "against thier will". I suspect that the Iranian occurrence was done in a similar way. Now, the similarities were: All of these incidents involved an individual knowingly and willfully jamming his own programming over a legally licensed Broadcast facility, which was in operation at the time of the offense.

Now, ask yourself: Does this activity have any real similarity to what we have come to know as "Pirate Radio"? I certainly don't think it does, at all. I have been lucky enough to copy a fair amount of "underground" stations over the years, and I even have managed to speak via the telephone or correspond by mail to some, and, WITHOUT FAIL, all who have spoken to me on the subject agree on one thing. They in no way want to interfere, jam, or in any other way want to do anything that would affect any other communications on or near the frequencies they operate on. They generally have taken great pains to make sure that thier equipment is technically "clean", and not radiating any harmonics or spurious signals. Some local stations will not even take to the air if there is a band opening, because even though they occupy frequencies that are vacant locally, if they copy DX coming in on the frequency they were considering using, they wouldn't go on the air. Does this sound like the actions of a "Pirate"? I wish that some Ham Operators were as considerate as these so-called "Outlaws", especially when it comes to listening on the frequency before transmitting!!

To be fair, though, I must admit that many of the precautions that these stations take so as not to interfere with others are largely to thier own benefit. After all, the best way to get a visit from the good, old F.C.C. is to create interference complaints either by the general public, or God Forbid, a licensed Broadcaster. That is a sure kiss of death. Also, any unlicensed/underground station's operators that have any sense at all will know that they almost never can overpower a legally licensed Broadcast station, except perhaps out to the limits of thier front yard, so they wisely avoid the competition. After all, I'm sure that they want their signals to be heard, and competing with Megawatt Broadcasters just won't hack it.

So, in closing, let me ask these questions: Are the great majority of the stations that we see in Kirk's Dialogs Column (although there haven't been many logged lately) breaking the law? Of course they are. They are in violation of the Communications Act of 1934.: Do I condone or encourage their actions? No, but there is a question as to the degree of the offenses that they commit. Who, after all, is hurt or made to suffer by thier actions? What exactly are these so-called "pirates" stealing?? If there was ever a "victimless crime" I suppose that operating an unlicensed transmitter could be considered one. In this sense, where does the term "pirate" apply? And finally,: Will I still listen and watch diligently in the future for Unlicensed/Underground stations as well as those that I consider to be the real Pirates? You bet your tail I will. The government hasn't gotten around to outlawing the monitoring of these signals yet, although I'm sure they're working on it!!! Maybe the next step in the erosion of our rights will be a "Pirate Radio ECPA".

Until then, good listening and 73,  
 Jim



after it began broadcasting, police seized the transmitter in the Havana suburb of Mariano (Sept. 12, 1957, p. u1).

At the end of September, another clandestine station called "Voice of the Revolution" began transmitting. The station was operated by a coalition of anti-Batista groups, which declared themselves the "Junta de Liberacion Cubana" in October. According to Lewis (19), the station fraudulently claimed to broadcast from the Sierra Maestra, by claiming to transmit "from a piece of free Cuban land." But apparently the metaphor was not intended to be misleading, as the station expressed hope that its "message reaches the Sierra Maestra, the symbol of liberty in America" (Sept. 26, 1957, p. g3).

On February 24, 1958, the Rebel Army in the Sierra Maestra established its own station, "Radio Rebelde" (24), under the leadership of Che Guevara. While principally used to report the successes of the rebels and the excesses of the government, "Radio Rebelde" occasionally carried anti-American programs. After Vice-President Richard Nixon's tour of Latin America, "Radio Rebelde" reported:

*Never before has a politician, a President or an ambassador reaped more rebukes, more hisses, and more hostility than the Vice-President of the United States, Richard Nixon, during his tour of South America. . . . Uruguayans, led by the students in Montevideo, protested American support of the dictatorships in America . . . . Between jeers and popular demonstrations, Nixon had a hard time in Colombia. . . . Nixon arrived in Venezuela and there also the people hissed him, threw stones at his automobile and injured his aides in the most explosive protest of all. . . (June 19, 1958, p. u2).*

During its first few months of activity, "Radio Rebelde" became the object of "black radio" operations. The black station operated on the same frequency, preempted the "Radio Rebelde" name, and claimed to broadcast from the Sierra Maestra. "Radio Rebelde" branded the black operation "a trick used by Batista to deceive the people" (May 27, 1958, p. g2). Batista forces also operated two gray stations, "Voice of Reason" and "Voz de la Libertad." Both stations advocated a nonviolent solution to Cuban problems and broadcast appeals to support the Batista government against Castro's "Communist insurgency."

Stimulated by the success of "Radio Rebelde" in circumventing Batista's press censorship, the guerrillas established another clandestine station, "Radio Frente Obrero Nacional," in the Sierra Cristal, when a second front was opened there (24). When the Cristal station began operating, the transmitter of "Radio Rebelde" was moved from Pata de la Mesa to Fidel Castro's headquarters in La Plata (2). It is reported that the Rebel Army also operated a third station (24).

After the unsuccessful uprising at Cienfuegos, urban activists in the Organizacion Autentica and the Directorio Revolucionario, an insurrectionist student organization, shifted activities from urban resistance to rural guerrilla warfare. The revolutionaries opened a guerrilla front in

the Escambray mountains and, like the Rebel Army, established a clandestine station, "Radio Cuba Libre" (2).

Other clandestine stations operating in Latin America during the same period were linked to the Cuban revolution and reflect the political intrigues of the Caribbean. "Radio Liberacion" (also called "Radio Rebelde") began broadcasting to Honduras only days following Fidel Castro's victory over Batista. The station hailed the Castro victory and called for a similar "liberation" from Honduran President Villeda Morales, to be led by Col. Armando Velazquez Cerrato (11). The colonel was financed by Dominican dictator Trujillo and Nicaragua's Somoza brothers. The station transmitter was probably located in Nicaragua, from where the rebels entered the country. Although the rebel station hailed Castro's victory, Castro supported Villeda Morales against the dictator-inspired forces.

In early 1959 Fidel Castro visited Caracas, where he and Venezuelan President Romulo Betancourt agreed to launch a campaign to oust Latin dictators like the Somozas and Trujillo (24, 44). Within weeks the Cuban and Venezuelan governments inaugurated clandestine and foreign service broadcasts directed at the Somoza and Trujillo governments. The broadcasts were preludes to armed intervention, culminating in the Cuban-Venezuelan invasion of the Dominican Republic on June 14, 1959 (25, 44).

While the clandestine "Radio Rebelde Dominicano" was advocating the overthrow of Trujillo, another clandestine station, "La Voz de Cuba Libre," began broadcasting anti-Castro programs. The station claimed to be broadcasting from the camp of anti-Castro rebels in the Sierra de Bamburanao mountains in Cuba; it was actually transmitting from the Dominican Republic (March 10, 1959, p. g3). As with the other clandestine broadcasts, this operation was a prelude to an armed Dominican attack on Cuba, the so-called "Morgan Plot" (12, 24). Although "La Voz de Cuba Libre" ceased operating after Castro and Trujillo reached an "accommodation," other anti-Castro clandestine stations appeared, primarily broadcasting from Miami (15, 46).<sup>5</sup>

*Gamal Abdel Nasser was the stimulus for clandestine broadcasting in the late 1950s and 1960s in the Middle East, based on two events: the Suez crisis and the formation of the United Arab Republic (U.A.R.).*

At the Arab Summit in Beirut following the Suez Crisis in 1956, two Arab states, Iraq and Lebanon, opposed Nasser's proposal to sever diplomatic relations with Britain and France for their attack on Egypt (16). The actions of Iraq and Lebanon engendered opposition from Arab

<sup>5</sup> FBIS Reports do not contain a self-report of the broadcasts of the notorious CIA-backed "Radio Swan." The station was monitored by the BBC and is discussed in a Cuban government broadcast reported in FBIS (March 1, 1961, pp. g3-g5).



nationalists within these countries and from Nasser, who had emerged as the spokesman of the pan-Arabic movement (16, 33). The pan-Arab opposition to Lebanon's Christian President Camille Chamoun and Iraq's King Faisal heightened when Egypt and Syria merged to form the U.A.R., as the merger represented the aspiration of Arab nationalism: a single Arab nation. The U.A.R. inaugurated clandestine radio broadcasts from the "Voice of Iraq," advocating pan-Arabism and the overthrow of King Faisal.

In July 1958, four months after the station started broadcasting, Col. Abdel Karim Qassem led a successful coup against the Iraqi monarchy, backed by Iraqi Arab nationalists and the U.A.R. After the coup, the Cairo-sponsored station stopped broadcasting, but only temporarily. It resumed operations on April 5, 1959, and was joined on April 22 by the "Radio of the Free Iraqi Republic," after it became apparent that Qassem and his supporters were not Nasserites. The stations claimed to be broadcasting from Iraq, but were probably located in Syria (5, p. 188).

After eliminating his pan-Arab opposition with Communist support, Qassem refused to legalize the Communist party and finally banned the official Communist party newspaper *Ittihad al-Sha'b* on June 1, 1960 (5, p. 278). In late June, a Communist-sponsored clandestine station, "The Voice of the [Iraqi] People," appeared. The station criticized the government from the left, while the U.A.R. stations attacked from the right.

In 1961 Qassem's refusal to grant autonomy to the Kurdish minority in Iraq led to an armed insurrection in Iraq's northern Kurdish provinces, which Qassem was unable to crush and which contributed to his overthrow in 1963 (5, p. 346). Qassem's immediate successors were no better at ending the rebellion during their tenure. In 1965, the Kurdish Democratic Party, the organization behind the insurgency, started the "Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan." The station continued to operate until 1970, when the Kurds finally arranged a ceasefire with the ruling Ba'athist party of Iraq. The station reportedly began operating again in 1974, after the Kurds and Ba'athists renewed their hostilities (22).

Although Nasser cannot be directly linked to the broadcasts of the "Voice of Free Lebanon," as he can be to the "Voice of Iraq," the station was probably also U.A.R.-sponsored. Jordanian Home Service, Amman Radio, placed the station's transmitter in Syria (May 21, 1958, p. F1). The Lebanese government, in a complaint lodged before the United Nations, alleged that the station was operated by the U.A.R. (23; see also 33). "Voice of Free Lebanon" called for Chamoun's overthrow in the name of Arab nationalism. It was countered by two anti-Nasser clandestine stations, the "Voice of Free Egypt" and the "Voice of Reform," which claimed to broadcast from Syria. The programs of the stations were directed to Syrian and Egyptian nationalists who opposed the merger of the two states, alleging that "[Nasser] symbolizes to the world a new brand of imperialism. . . he dissolved political parties, suspended par-

liamentary life and discriminated against Syrians in ministerial appointments" (May 1, 1958, p. B7).

Umar Lufti, the U.A.R. representative to the United Nations, alleged that Lebanon was the source of clandestine broadcasts directed at his government (20), although Nasser, in a later speech over Cairo Radio, contended that Western "imperialists" were the sponsors of the broadcasts (Dec. 27, 1960, p. B7).<sup>6</sup> Qubain (33) supports Lufti's contention, placing the transmitter of "Voice of Reform" in Northern Lebanon, not Syria. Qubain asserts that the station was operated by the anti-U.A.R. Syrian Nationalist Social Party (also known as the "Popular Party of Syria"), but incorrectly states that the station stopped broadcasting in May 1958 when the transmitter was destroyed by Lebanese Moslems. The station operated throughout 1958 and was even heard in 1959 (Jan. 8, 1959, p. G1). Qubain also mentions four low-power clandestine stations not monitored in *FBIS Reports*.

As in Iraq, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic, clandestine broadcasting in Lebanon was a prelude to armed insurrection. When the armed insurrection spread from Lebanon to Jordan, the U.S. and Britain intervened militarily to "restore order" in the countries. Although the interventions temporarily halted the political upheavals, the net effect on clandestine broadcasting was an increase in the number of operating stations. Following the interventions, two pan-Arabic anti-intervention stations appeared: "Voice of the [Lebanese] People" and "Jordan People's Radio"; both stopped broadcasting about a year later.

After Syria proclaimed itself the Syrian Arab Republic in 1961, a clandestine station, the "Voice of the Arabic Nation," appeared. The Algerian revolt stimulated broadcasts from the "Voice of the Algerian People" and, in 1962, from the "Algerie Presse Service."

Although clandestine stations were active in Latin America and the Middle East during the late 1950s, other areas of the world were relatively quiet (see Tables 1 and 2). In Africa, a black nationalist station, "The Voice of Free Africa," operated for several years, while only "Radio Pathet Lao" was heard in Asia.

*Although fewer clandestine radio stations operated between 1965 and 1967, the conflict associated with the stations was greater, especially in Southeast Asian countries where U.S. troops were deployed.*

In all Southeast Asian countries where the U.S. had a military presence, clandestine stations operated (16, 27, 31, 51). But clandestine broadcasting did not begin with U.S. military deployments. During 1955

<sup>6</sup> In his speech before the United Nations, Lufti (20) identified one anti-U.A.R. clandestine station as "Voice of Truth." The identification is either a mistake or a reference to a clandestine station not monitored by *FBIS* or mentioned by Qubain (33).



three clandestine stations operated in South Vietnam: a station of the "armed sects" (Cao Dai and Hoa Hao) called "Voice of the Unified Front of All Nationalist Forces"; an anti-Diem, anti-Communist station operated by the nationalist Dai Viet party; and a pro-Diem station, "Voice of the People's Union." The stations stopped operating after South Vietnamese President Diem consolidated power, driving the Dai Viet party underground and defeating the armies of the sects (27).

The first Communist clandestine station operating in Southeast Asia during the 1960s was "Radio Pathet Lao." The Pathet Lao, forced out of the ruling coalition government in 1960, escaped to Sam Neua province, where they started a new insurgency. Because the Pathet Lao were reportedly directed by the North Vietnamese, the station's proximity to the border may have given the North Vietnamese greater control over transmissions. It is likely that the station was established under North Vietnamese supervision, as the Pathet Lao were dependent on North Vietnam for military, technical, and propaganda assistance (17). The transmitter was shifted to Hanoi when bombing raids in Laos made the provincial location unsafe (22).

When the conflict in Southeast Asia escalated in 1963, the Pathet Lao broke relations with their previous ally, the Laotian Neutralist Forces, and drove the Neutralists from the strategic Plain of Jars. The Pathet Lao then created a "front organization," called the "Patriotic Neutralist Forces" (17), to give the appearance of an unbroken alliance against the Vientiane government. During the last half of the 1960s, this organization also operated a clandestine transmitter, broadcasting as the "Radio of the Patriotic Neutralist Forces." It was joined by a third pro-Pathet Lao station, "Voice of the Laotian Kingdom," which transmitted in the name of all "anti-imperialist" forces in Laos.

The National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, founded in 1960, started "Liberation Radio" on February 1, 1962, from inside South Vietnam.<sup>7</sup> It initially broadcast about 90 minutes daily, but by 1966 was broadcasting 67 hours weekly in five languages: Vietnamese, Cambodian, Mandarin, Cantonese, and English. The English-language broadcasts were directed at U.S. servicemen stationed in Vietnam (41). In addition to news reports and commentaries, the station featured music, poetry, and drama. Magne (22) and the underground newspaper *The Guardian* (34) attribute a large listenership to the station, but Pike (31) claims that the South Vietnamese government effectively jammed the station, making it unintelligible to all but approximately 10 percent of

<sup>7</sup> An insurgent station called "Voice of Liberation" reportedly broadcast during 1961. Because the signal source of "Voice of Liberation" changed frequently, it was believed that it broadcast from a barge on the Mekong delta. The station stopped broadcasting after a typhoon hit the delta, giving rise to the theory that the station had sunk (31).

South Vietnamese. With the fall of Saigon and the integration of the North and South Vietnamese broadcast systems into the "Voice of Vietnam," "Liberation Radio" ceased operations.

*Another country hit with military conflicts and clandestine station activity during the 1960s was Cyprus.*

The 1960 constitutional agreement giving Cyprus independence from Great Britain granted the Turkish minority (about 20 percent) an over-representation in the civil service, army, and legislature, and established separate Greek and Turkish municipalities. Support for the constitution was strongest in the Turkish areas of the island (see 37).

From independence until 1963, hostilities between the two communities heightened. The Greek-controlled state-owned Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) "kept up a propaganda barrage in favor of *enosis*" (federation with Greece) and provided the Turkish minority with "notoriously poor" Turkish language programming (32, pp. 74, 319). The unrest escalated into civil war. After the hostilities began, the CBC refused to air Turkish Vice-President Kucuk's appeal for calm, while the Greek Cypriot government cut off telephone and telegraph lines to the Turkish quarter. Communication by the Turkish Cypriots with the outside world was re-established on December 28 when the clandestine "Bayrack Radio" signed on. The station broadcast from the Turkish quarter of Nicosia. On January 7, it was joined by "Radio Sancack." The following September, the "Voice of Cyprus" appeared.<sup>8</sup>

The withdrawal of Turkish Cypriots into their own enclaves and the deployment of U.N. troops between the warring factions created a *de facto* separate Turkish administration of Cyprus. "Bayrack Radio" functioned as the local voice and "Voice of Cyprus" as the foreign service voice of the administration. The stations operated until 1974 in this capacity and were subsidized by the mainland Turkish government.

The status of "Bayrack Radio" and "Voice of Cyprus" changed in 1974. On July 15, 1974, President Makarios was overthrown by the Greek Cypriot National Guard. Makarios, warned of the upcoming coup, fled from Cyprus to the island of Paphos and then to Malta. From a clandestine station of Paphos ("Voice of Free Cyprus"), the world heard about the coup. Makarios broadcast an appeal to the world and to his Cypriot supporters from the station before it was silenced by Greek Cypriot gunboats (37, p. 88).

The government of Turkey was aware that the coup was inspired by the mainland Greek junta. Five days after the coup, Turkey invaded

<sup>8</sup> *FBIS Reports* do not list "Radio Sancack," "Canbulat Radio," and several other Cypriot clandestine stations. For information on these stations, see Purcell (32).



Cyprus under the pretense of restoring the constitutional government; the unstated purpose was to divide the island (32). Turkey partitioned the island and established the Turkish Cypriot Provisional Administration in the Northeast; when Makarios returned, he found a bizonal republic consisting of two autonomous administrations. "Bayrack Radio" and "Voice of Cyprus" became the above-ground stations of the Turkish zone. With the creation of a centralized Turkish federated zone, "Radio Sancak" and the other clandestine stations fell silent.

*Despite the cessation of operations by "Liberation Radio," "Voice of Truth," and many other stations, clandestine operations have continued unabated throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s.*

Shortwave operators found approximately fifty stations operating regularly during the middle 1970s (21, 22). In areas where there had previously been little clandestine activity, new stations were heard. In Africa, liberation movements operated transmitters. Seven clandestine stations appeared in Northern Ireland during the 1970s. In Latin America, a region where clandestine stations had not been heard since the early 1960s, new stations have appeared. One clandestine station, operated by Salvadoran guerrillas, is used by U.S. news media as an alternative information source to official junta broadcasts (38).

Clandestine stations most frequently broadcast to countries where open political opposition is forbidden. Listening to clandestine stations is usually also proscribed. For this reason, it is difficult to determine the extent of clandestine station listenership, as those who listen are unlikely to admit that they do so. During the era of Batista, for example, listening to "Radio Rebelde" was forbidden. Those who did listen "closed their windows" before tuning to the station (27).

Although the extent of clandestine stations cannot be determined—and the existence of clandestine stations is no proof of listenership—large listenerships have been attributed to several stations, including "Liberation Radio" (22, 34) and "Radio Rebelde" (9). The groups operating these stations, the NLF and the Sierra Maestra guerrillas, allegedly had widespread support prior to the establishment of the stations (24, 27), and this support probably led to the large listenerships, rather than the other way around.

The NLF and the Sierra Maestra guerrillas were also well-organized (and well-armed) political oppositions. Such a cohesive political organization appears to be necessary for sustaining a clandestine station—and only if a station can be sustained can it hope to acquire a large listenership. A political organization capable of operating a clandestine station over a long period of time is probably also capable of sustaining an underground political organization within a country. The members of

the political organization provide a listenership for the station and serve as a catalyst for expanding that listenership. This may be the strategy currently being utilized in El Salvador, Namibia, and Indonesia.

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 \* THE F.C.C. AND PART 15: \*  
 \* WHAT ARE THEY AFRAID OF? \*  
 \* by \*  
 \* Jim Garrity \*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

Once upon a time, (in 1934, actually) Congress created the F.C.C., and charged the new agency with the task of organizing and controlling the actions of the fledgling Broadcast industry. This was necessary, because in the early days of radio, the stations were totally out of control. They jumped all around in frequency at will, usually landing on top of each other, causing massive interference and general chaos on the bands. The problem was compounded by the fact that in those days, the receivers were as broad as a barn door, and adjacent channel interference could be caused by stations being as much as 100 kilohertz apart or more, in a worst case condition. The new Commission was given broad powers, and had a strong enforcement division, as opposed to it's predecessor, the Federal Radio Commission, which was rather toothless in that respect. In addition to regulating broadcasters, the agency was also given regulatory jurisdiction over any and all devices and equipment that was capable of emitting radio waves in any capacity, and over devices that might cause interference of any kind to radio receivers. They set minimum allowable levels of radiation that equipment could emit without having to be licensed, and they also set up guidelines for the use of low powered unlicensed communication devices. These rules are the basis of this article.

It is my feeling that, with some careful modification and expansion, Part 15 could be a very important factor in Broadcasting in the future, and could also be a major force in helping to solve some of our society's problems.

In the first place, let me state that I consider the section of Part 15 that deals with limiting excessive radiation of radio and electrical interference to be a force and a total failure. Is there a DX'er among us that has not been driven to distraction by the QRM and QRN caused by various electrical and electronic devices? Some of the greatest offenders in this respect are light dimmers, electric blankets and heating pads, fishtank heaters, refrigerators, and just about any other device that contains a thermostatic device to regulate temperature. And new on the noise list are these so-called "Touch Lamps", which seem to generate radio frequency interference whether or not they are lit. Out, perhaps the worst offender when it comes to noise generation is the good old "boob tube". It seems to me that television receivers, which always have generated a lot of junk in the past, have gotten even worse! The harmonics of the 15,750 kilohertz sweep circuits in these things can be heard WAY up into the shortwave spectrum, and are almost impossible to eliminate. There are so many of these noisy beasts around that it is sometimes impossible to DX at my location on some frequencies. This interference is spewing out of all of these devices, (and countless others, too numerous to catalog) even though they all bear Part 15 certification stickers. Who are they trying to kid? So, Part 15 has not been effective in helping to protect the public from shoddy and poorly engineered devices that hinder our ability to get the most from our receivers, but it has been quite effective in holding back the development of true "grassroots" Community and Experimental broadcasting.

The FCC, in theory at least, has provided for the sanctioning of low-powered, license-free communication devices in certain parts of the electromagnetic spectrum under the Part 15 Regulations. These devices could, on a non-interference basis with respect to licensed broadcasters, be used to provide a truly unique, "neighborhood broadcasting" service to the public. Unfortunately, the Commission, for some reason, seems to be afraid to let the general public have access on such a personal basis to such media outlets.



I wonder why they don't trust us? It is apparent that they do not want this type of activity to take place, since the technical restrictions of the Regulations, as well as the frequency bands in which Part 15 operation is permitted, are quite stringent, and serve to self-limit the extent to which these small "mini-broadcasters" can be received by the general public. At this point, some readers might say: "Who cares about Part 15 anyway, and furthermore, what difference would it make if the FCC did relax some of their Regulations governing low-powered, unlicensed broadcast transmitters?" Well, in my opinion, these actions could mean a great deal to the future of U.S. broadcasting. We, as a society, have become non-participatory spectators in areas which are very important to our way of life. The Broadcast Media, for instance, is a major force in the formulation of the public's opinions, and it is precisely this media which is becoming more and more out of the reach of the general public, from an ownership and controlling standpoint. Mergers, takeovers, and other business machinations have taken place in the last few years, with the net result that all three of the major TV Networks have changed ownership. FCC deregulation has made it possible for less owners to control more media outlets nationwide as well as locally. There may be more radio and TV stations on the air now than there were ten years ago, but there are fewer people in control of them, and fewer actual choices in programming and opinions aired, as a result. The concept of the individually-owned local broadcast station is rapidly becoming a thing of the past, with large, nationwide big-money syndicates buying up as many stations as they can get their hands on. This is not a healthy trend. Another angle on this concept is the spectre of foreign control of our Broadcast Media. At this time, it is still a requirement that the owner of a U.S. broadcast station be an American citizen, but I can see the day when this requirement could be dropped, and even if it isn't, citizenship is not the hardest thing to attain for a foreign national. (Rupert Murdoch, the owner of the new Fox Broadcasting Network, for instance, gave up his Australian citizenship and became an American citizen in order to get into the U.S. broadcasting business. He still, however, has major broadcast holdings back in his native land, and has extensive European broadcast holdings. He owns Skychannel, a European satellite broadcasting network.) It would be naive for anyone to assume that by simply becoming a citizen of another country, an individual would then therefore lose all of their loyalty and love for their native land. So, the possibility of large, Multinational Broadcasting systems operating in our country, with no inherent loyalty to this country, is possible in the future. (Sort of like an OPEC of Broadcasting---some thought, eh?) At the rate that U.S. factories, farmland, and other real estate holdings are falling into foreign hands, it isn't too far-fetched an idea that our Broadcast Media could be next, and folks, once the land, the farms, the factories and the media are under foreign control, America's sovereignty as a nation will no longer exist!

How can liberalization of the existing Part 15 Rules help forestall this situation? Well, it could open up a whole new and inherently local system of broadcasting in America, and allow regular, everyday people that are not necessarily rich to get involved in the world of broadcasting in an ownership and/or operational capacity, instead of as spectators. Some of our young people, who in all too many cases turn to suicide or drug abuse because they don't see a place for themselves in the future, might be inspired to start their own "mini-broadcast" stations, and in the process, learn about entrepreneurship and see that there is a place to express their talents. Cynics might say that young people can get involved in radio now, by becoming Ham operators, but, almost invariably when you mention Ham Radio to a young person, they reply: "Oh yeah, Ham Radio---that's where a bunch of old men sit in their basements all day and night sending Morse Code to each other, isn't it?" (For the record, I am a Ham Operator, and I don't care for the image we seem to have either, but it exists, nonetheless) On the other hand, I defy anyone to show me a youngster that doesn't LISTEN to radio, or watch TV for a large portion of the day. They

certainly love radio, and music, but they don't feel like they can be involved in it---they only can be spectators. Well, Part 15 liberalization could help to break down this impression that they have.

Therefore, I would like to propose that several changes be made to the Part 15 Regulations:

1- On the AM Broadcast band, I suggest that the input power to the final amplifier be increased to one watt, up from 100 milliwatts, and that the maximum allowable antenna length be kept at fifty feet maximum, but that the feedline length not be considered as part of the antenna, and thusly not be restricted. The AM band is dying, anyway, and it's listenership is at an all-time low point, so why not allow some new, local activity to happen there.

2- On the FM Broadcast band, I suggest that equipment used for Part 15 operations not be required to be FCC Type-Approved. Prior to 1975, there were no Type-Approval requirements in the regulations for FM operations under Part 15---could it just be a coincidence that prior to 1975, the FM Band was under-utilized, and really not a "major" media force. As soon as FM's listenership started growing in the early 70's, and it then became an economically viable broadcast medium, the FCC effectively took the public's Part 15 accessibility away, by mandating that all such equipment used under Part 15 be Type-Approved. The requirements for Type-Approval for FM Part 15 operations are so stringent that except for the kiddie-toy "Mr. Microphone" type gadgets that have miniscule power output, there are, to my knowledge, no commercially produced transmitters on the market for this band. I suggest that, in addition to the removal of Type-Approval requirements, that the power output of a transmitter in the FM Broadcast band under Part 15 regulations be increased to 100 milliwatts, as measured at the antenna terminals. In addition, the maximum field-strength limitations for signals emitted by said transmitters should be eliminated, and that the use of directional antennas be permitted, so that any potential interference to licensed broadcasters could be eliminated. The FM broadcast band in particular would be an excellent "neighborhood broadcasting" medium, since the very nature of FM, with the "capture effect" characteristic, could allow transmitters only several blocks away from each other to share the same frequency, without appreciable interference to each other, within their individual coverage areas.

3- On the UHF and VHF Television Broadcast bands, I suggest that Part 15 operations be permitted, (it is illegal to emit a signal of any strength on these frequencies without authorization under the present regulations) with the maximum allowable power output to be 100 milliwatts, as measured at the antenna terminals, with directional antenna use permitted to eliminate any possible interference to licensed broadcasters.

I would suggest that in addition to the changes proposed above, that all equipment allowable for use under Part 15 Rules have crystal or phase-locked-loop frequency control, for good stability, and that the modulation modes and bandwidths for all above equipment be consistent with the existing broadcast standards for the bands in use.

So, in closing, I believe that these proposals could do a lot to help us in the future if they are adopted, and in the process, they might give us some new, innovative programming to watch and listen to. What are the chances of the FCC actually implementing anything proposed here? Probably very slim, since we as radio users have NO clout, and no high-powered lobbyists to represent our interests with respect to FCC policies. You see, the Commission has very few objections when special-interest industry groups voice their desire to carve up our existing broadcast bands for their own selfish uses, even when there is a possibility that these "new" uses might actually cause interference to the general public's radio & TV reception! (See articles on a nearby page, dealing with some new Rulemakings which allow Broadcasters and industry to use TV frequencies for non-broadcast purposes, and also check out the article on the "Rec-TV" transmitters---a bit of a double standard, don't you think?)



So, it is obvious that the FCC doesn't really care if the general public gets interference, as long as the interference is generated by devices that we ourselves cannot legally use!

73's and good DX,  
Jim Garrity

*Pirate radio ships have beamed music into England and Northern Europe since the 1960s, when an increasing public demand for rock on the airwaves came up against a rigidly controlled British radio industry. Both independent and BBC stations were, and remain, tightly restricted as to how many hours of music they could play a day (the current amount is about nine hours) and were forced to pay set royalties every time a needle touched a record. Some radio entrepreneurs got around these regulations by outfitting boats with broadcasting equipment, sailing into international waters, dropping anchor, and beaming unregulated rock into the U.K. There are currently only two pirate radio stations operating off the coast of England. One, the Canadian-owned Radio Caroline, is moored in the North Sea and illegally uses British deejays. The other, Laser 558, is an American station that began broadcasting May 24, 1984, from the Communicator, anchored just a few hundred yards from Radio Caroline. Its seven American deejays, recruited at stations from Muscle Shoals, Alabama, to Iowa City, Iowa, broadcast Top 40 rock 'n' roll to 12 million listeners in nine different countries. We sent a writer and a photographer aboard the Communicator to chronicle Laser's first birthday celebration.*

**A**t the Zetland Arms Pub in London, going aboard a pirate radio ship sounded like a glamorous, exciting adventure. Will and I sat at one of the pub's outside tables, tuned my little Sony to 558 AM, and heard cool American voices talking about the high life on the high seas between songs by Springsteen, Prince, and ZZ Top. At the Hippo-

drome discotheque that night, we amazed and impressed people with tales of our impending voyage. Nearly everyone had listened to Laser—but to actually step up onto the deck, shake the hands of deejays, and break bread with them in the galley—ah, we were the luckiest duo in the UK!

A dozen hours later, Will looked as if he was going to die. His camera bag thrown carelessly on the floor, his pale face cradled in the crook of his left arm, he lay moaning on the narrow bunk, wishing he'd never left home. We were in the rank, freezing guts of a fishing boat we'd boarded like spies at 4 a.m., and we'd been pitching and rolling through churning seas for three hours. It was even worse topside, where the pitching seemed more violent and the icy wind cut through our leather jackets.

Up top, four Laser contest winners, weighted down by parkas and binoculars, were crowded around the fishing boat captain, each trying to be the first to spot the

*Communicator*. They braced themselves against the bridge and seemed to relish the violent bashing and bouncing of the boat; for them, this nightmarish jaunt was a high point of the year.

The captain's first mate, a moon-faced man with soggy black whiskers, came at us with plates in his hands. "Breakfast," he said, setting them down. They were covered with fried eggs, bacon, sausages, and potatoes, all swimming in grease. "It's pretty rough today, isn't it?" I asked the mate, trying not to look at the eggs. "This?" he said, popping a sausage in his mouth. "This is *calm*."

"They acted like maniacs," she said, laughing. "No, everybody came by to pay their respects. But when I got here, there was almost no water, and almost immediately a bad storm hit. After one week, I'd thrown up on the air so much that Tommy came in and took two hours of my shift. Then the tower fell at 4 a.m. on Saturday. I stayed in my room till Monday night, when someone came screaming into my cabin at 7 o'clock saying, 'Get your life jacket on!' We'd broken our anchor chain and drifted two and a half miles. A few days earlier, a Polish frigate had sunk in the North Sea and 26 men had been killed. I was sick, and I just wanted to die. But it calmed down that week, and I haven't thrown up since."

"Was the ship moving more than it was last night?" I asked.

The girls' eyes widened and they laughed. "Moving? That wasn't anything! Then it was moving so much you could stand like this"—Erin braced her feet against the door of her cabin—"and you would stand up. Clocks would fall off the wall, and during your show the microphone would slide from side to side—you had to follow it with your mouth, or tie it off with string."

So there are some things you can get used to on a pirate radio ship in the middle of the sea. But other things just get more and more difficult.

"There are dangers you can fall into out here," Chris said. "Alcoholism, for one."

"And letting time just... slip away," said Erin.

Chris nodded. "A lot of people sleep an incredible amount. You do it out of fatigue, boredom."

Another danger awaits them on land, when they get their holidays. "It's like your mind loses some of its sharpness out here. And when you get back on land, you flip out about cars and people and stuff," Chris said. "It's real scary. Out in the world, there are so many different inputs you have to deal with and worry about. But here, you're down to the basics, Jack. Because it's all provided for you, what you eat and where you sleep, it's all too... easy."

The worst thing of all, they agreed, was the loneliness. The *Communicator* isn't exactly the *Love Boat*, although romances have bloomed on board and worked out

nically. Former Laser deejay Holly Michaels is currently living in Maine and engaged to a former *Communicator* captain, Tim Levensaylor. But more often than not, being lovesick at Laser can lead to problems. The men and women on the boat are always on *the boat*, with everyone else just a cabin away, 24 hours a day. They eat together, get mad together, get sick together. So the ordinary kidding and flirting that happens between people with landlocked jobs isn't always possible.

All the deejays have had bouts with romance on land, but that has its problems, too. You can't talk on the phone, and if you write letters they might not arrive for weeks, so you basically disappear from the other person's life for two months at a time. That person isn't always waiting for you when you go on your next holiday.

"I met a Flemish guy in Paris, and he's back in Belgium now," Chris said. "That's over with, of course, but..."

"Tell us something," Erin said. "You didn't know us before, but just in land terms, do you think that all of this has changed us?"

"I think I've hardened," Chris said, a little worried. "That's what I feel has happened to me."

"I mean, how do you see us?" Erin asked. "Do we still seem like girls?"

**f**ler

darkness fell, rumors went around that a tug was coming out that night, loaded with supplies. "I'll believe it when I see it," Ric said, sitting in the production room. Ric was trying to explain why he'd put up with this life for a year and a half.

"I wanted to see the thing work," he said. "I get a regular salary, what I'm used to in the States, a lot of tax advantages, and three months' paid holiday each year. I figured after what I'd put into it already, I may as well stay and reap the benefits. But there are big adjustments you have to make in your life. In America, deejays have a telephone and get to go onstage all the time. I don't mind not having a tele-



phone so much. But I do mind not living in a day-to-day life. It's a real effort to say, 'Hey, better get going! You gotta catch your bus,' because it just doesn't happen out here."

He spun an empty turntable with his finger, and watched someone walk by outside the soundproof glass. "You know, there are zero people on this ship that I knew 12 months ago. That includes the crew as well—they turn over faster than the deejays. Right now what I want more than anything else in the world is a wife, someone to share the rest of my life with. Because I never meet people that I'm going to know for a hell of a long time. As soon as you get real close to someone, they leave, or you leave. And that's very hard to take."

**A** tug did come out to the ship that night, just after 2 a.m. Everybody gathered on deck to watch as it came into view. Laser's program director, John Castle, was on board, along with a huge assortment of welcome supplies—everything from toilet paper to beer to propane fuel.

Castle had also brought a belated birthday present: several Harrod's shopping bags full of pâté, smoked ham, cheese, and other amazing gourmet delights. Everyone was ecstatic. It was just like Christmas.

Tommy bounded on deck, wearing a University of Minnesota sweatshirt and grinning with the anticipation of his freedom. He had a bag slung over his shoulder and was headed for Tunisia.

Erin and Chris hugged Will and me goodbye. It was really very sad—I felt as if we should do something, like try to smuggle them off in our bags. Instead, we climbed down onto the tug and stood on its empty deck as it churned off into the black, quiet sea. We watched the girls and the others lined up at the ship's rail, waving us off. They kept waving until we could hardly see them any more, and we kept looking back until Laser 558 was only a dot of light blinking on the horizon. It blinked once or twice, and then it was gone. ■

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actually drifted over a sandbar, but we caught it at flood tide, so we were cool. If we'd caught it at ebb tide, we'd have been racked up. Radio Caroline's former ship sank about three miles from here. Its antenna is still sticking out of the water."

And if the storms don't get them, hired thugs might. Last December, an alleged plot was uncovered in which the chief executive of Essex Radio, an independent British station whose ratings had been hurt by Laser, discussed hiring a boatload of ruffians to steam out to the *Communicator*, board the ship, seize the crew, smash the transmitter, cut the anchor chain, and tow the ship back to port. The London tabloids had a field day with the story, and no one really took it too seriously, but it remains in the back of everyone's mind on the *Communicator*. High-seas piracy—now *that's* something that never happens in Iowa City.

## Charlie

Wolf is, as he'll be the first to tell you, the most popular Laser deejay. The others have fairly standard American FM styles on the air, but not Charlie. Charlie is...berserk. In the studio from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. each night, he cranks the speakers and headphones up all the way, dims the lights, pushes the chair back because he won't need it, and jabbers ecstatically into the mike, dancing while he incites his audience to a fever pitch. To an England accustomed to dry, solemn BBC deejays, Charlie Wolf is a revelation.

For the Laser birthday show, Charlie stood on the deck with a remote mike and headset giving party reports from the "Laser luau birthday party" to Craig Novack, a deejay who'd only been on board a month. Craig happens to be a very distant New England cousin of Princess Diana, which delighted Fleet Street, but he looks and acts more like a beefy David Letterman, right down to the tiny gap between his two front teeth.

His hand went to his ear. "What's that? Yes. Yes! We're here at the Laser first-birthday bash. Uh, hey! Excuse me! Move the...yeah. We have a little bit of congestion up here with the yachts coming in for the party. Sir? Yes, I know that's Princess Stephanie's yacht, but can you bring it along to the other side of the boat? Thank you. It's crazy because up here, Craig, David Bowie's out here, of course, and oh, there's Ann Diamond and Lindsay Willis from *Good Morning, Britain*. It's a madhouse up here. Do you want us to send you down some Spam hors d'oeuvres? They're going quick."

Charlie collared Chris to do an imitation of Michael Jackson and got Erin Kelly, the only other woman on board, to do Queen Elizabeth, puking royally over the side.

Even Charlie, a grinning, big-schnozzed jokester who probably drives everybody crazy because he's so up all the time, seemed a little bit bummed by this faked birthday party. He knew a million people actually believed they were having a blowout on board; they kept hearing the deejays play "Birthday" by the Beatles, and they kept hearing Charlie's chaotic remote reports. In real life, the obnoxious Beatles song was driving the deejays absolutely nuts, and Charlie had only me for company.

He grabbed his ear again. "Yeah Craig, akk! Sorry, the wind's changed, and all I can smell is the roast pig. They're hooking a line up to an oil tanker filled with booze, and it should be coming into the ship's water system any moment. Also the United States space shuttle just flew by moments ago—I thought that was pretty exciting."

**With** the ship's last puffs of propane fuel, Martine cooked up some skinny little steaks for everyone that night. Then someone somehow managed to come up with a tiny cherry cake. And for a ship that had been dry of alcohol that morning, the *Communicator* suddenly looked like a saloon—everyone, it seemed, had stashed away an emergency Guinness Stout, and bottles of cheap white wine began popping up everywhere.

**Will** and I slept fitfully on the padded benches of the starboard mess and awoke to something incredible: a sunny day. I sat up, thinking we'd run aground, but found the explanation when I looked through the escape hatch. Overnight, the North Sea had calmed to dark-blue glass. The breeze striking the boat was almost warm. Standing, I didn't have to lean against something to get my balance.

The night's passing had changed the mood on the ship, too. The "birthday party" had been disappointing, even a little violent belowdecks, but it seemed to have been cathartic. Everyone had mellowed out, and now they were walking quietly toward breakfast, holding their heads and moaning.

Around noon, I went looking for Erin. She had come to Laser from Muscle Shoals, Alabama, and had seemed a little friendlier than Chris. Yet she'd been somewhat reserved in her earlier conversations with us, as if she, too, wished we hadn't barged into their lives on the boat.

I walked down steep steps to the cabins for the first time, nervous. I didn't want to seem as though I was invading people's privacy. I found Erin sitting on her bunk writing a letter. Her cabin was tiny, just a bunk and a wall and a narrow stretch of floor, but it was full of rich, polished wood, and the light from outside made it gleam. It seemed very peaceful.

"Did you have fun last night?" Erin asked. "Kind of interesting, wasn't it?"

There was a tap on the wall behind me: Chris. She came in, sat down by Erin, and apologized for being cold the day before.

I told her it was okay, that I understood. Then I asked her what it had been like four months before, when she'd first come to the *Communicator* all the way from Iowa to find herself the only woman on board a ship full of men.



# Assoc. of Clandestine Radio Enthusiasts

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